

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 688

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize Presidential Honors Scholarships to be awarded to all students who graduate in the top five percent of their secondary school graduating class, to promote and recognize high academic achievement in secondary school, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 1, 1997

Mr. BIDEN (by request) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

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## A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize Presidential Honors Scholarships to be awarded to all students who graduate in the top five percent of their secondary school graduating class, to promote and recognize high academic achievement in secondary school, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Presidential Honors  
5       Scholarship Act of 1997”.

1 **SEC. 2. PRESIDENTIAL HONORS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.**

2 Part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of  
3 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.) is amended—

4 (1) by amending the heading for subpart 7 to  
5 read as follows:

6 “Subpart 7—Presidential Honors Scholarship Program”;

7 and

8 (2) by inserting immediately before subpart 8  
9 (20 U.S.C. 1070f et seq.) the following:

10 **“SEC. 420A. PRESIDENTIAL HONORS SCHOLARSHIP PRO-**  
11 **GRAM.**

12 “(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this subpart to  
13 establish a Presidential Honors Scholarship program to  
14 encourage high academic achievement in public and pri-  
15 vate secondary schools and to recognize and reward the  
16 achievement of the outstanding graduates of such schools.

17 “(b) PROGRAM AUTHORITY.—The Secretary is au-  
18 thorized, in accordance with this subpart, to carry out a  
19 program of recognizing high academic achievement in pub-  
20 lic and private secondary schools by awarding scholarships  
21 to all students who graduate in the top five percent of  
22 their secondary school graduating class, and thereby en-  
23 couraging students to excel in their secondary school stud-  
24 ies and pursue postsecondary education.

25 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
26 are authorized to be appropriated \$130,000,000 for fiscal

1 year 1998, and such sums as may be necessary for each  
 2 of the four succeeding fiscal years, to carry out this sub-  
 3 part. Funds appropriated pursuant to the authority of the  
 4 preceding sentence shall remain available for obligation  
 5 until the last day of the fourth fiscal year immediately suc-  
 6 ceeding the fiscal year for which such funds are appro-  
 7 priated.

8 “(d) TERMS OF SCHOLARSHIPS.—

9 “(1) AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIP.—

10 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The amount of a  
 11 scholarship awarded under this subpart shall be  
 12 \$1,000.

13 “(B) REDUCTION.—Notwithstanding sub-  
 14 paragraph (A), if funds available in a fiscal  
 15 year are insufficient to fully fund all scholar-  
 16 ships under this subpart for such year, the  
 17 amount paid to each student under this subpart  
 18 for such year shall be reduced proportionately.

19 “(C) SPECIAL RULES.—Notwithstanding  
 20 any other provision in this title, a scholarship  
 21 awarded under this subpart—

22 “(i) shall not be counted in determin-  
 23 ing the student’s need for grant, loan, or  
 24 work assistance under this title; and

1                   “(ii) may, alone or in combination  
 2                   with other grant, loan, or work assistance  
 3                   received under this title, exceed the stu-  
 4                   dent’s cost of attendance, as defined in  
 5                   section 472.

6                   “(2) PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIPS.—A student  
 7                   who satisfies the requirements of subsection (f) may  
 8                   receive a scholarship under this subpart for a period  
 9                   of not more than one academic year of postsecond-  
 10                  ary education or training on at least a half-time  
 11                  basis, as determined by the institution.

12                  “(3) SCHOLARSHIP PROCEEDS.—

13                  “(A) USE AND AVAILABILITY.—Scholar-  
 14                  ship proceeds shall be used for the scholarship  
 15                  recipient’s first year of postsecondary education  
 16                  or training, and shall remain available for such  
 17                  use for not more than three academic years fol-  
 18                  lowing the student’s graduation from secondary  
 19                  school.

20                  “(B) DISBURSAL.—Scholarship proceeds  
 21                  shall be disbursed on behalf of students who re-  
 22                  ceive scholarships under this subpart to the in-  
 23                  stitutions of higher education at which the stu-  
 24                  dents are enrolled. No scholarship proceeds  
 25                  shall be disbursed on behalf of a student until

1           the student is enrolled at an institution of high-  
2           er education on at least a half-time basis, as de-  
3           termined by such institution.

4           “(4) USE AT ANY INSTITUTION PERMITTED.—

5           A scholarship awarded under this subpart may be  
6           used to attend any institution of higher education,  
7           as defined in section 481.

8           “(e) SELECTION OF SCHOLARS.—

9           “(1) IN GENERAL.—Scholarships under this  
10          subpart shall be awarded to all students who rank  
11          in the top five percent of the graduating class of  
12          each secondary school that participates in the pro-  
13          gram under this subpart. Ranking procedures shall  
14          be established by each such school, but may not in-  
15          clude any nonacademic or extracurricular factors.

16          “(2) ANNUAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF SCHOLAR-  
17          SHIPS.—Each participating secondary school shall  
18          announce the availability of scholarships under this  
19          subpart, and its selection procedures, to all students  
20          in the school, and their parents, at the beginning of  
21          each academic year.

22          “(3) RECORDS.—Each participating school  
23          shall maintain records of its selection procedures,  
24          the names of the students selected, and such other  
25          related information as the Secretary may require.

1       “(f) STUDENT ELIGIBILITY.—In order to receive a  
2 scholarship under this subpart, a student shall—

3               “(1) rank in the top five percent of the grad-  
4 uating class at the secondary school that the student  
5 attends, as established by such school in accordance  
6 with subsection (e); and

7               “(2) meet the requirements of section 484.

8       “(g) RECOGNITION OF SCHOLARSHIP RECEIPT.—

9               “(1) DESIGNATION OF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPI-  
10 ENTS.—Students awarded scholarships under this  
11 subpart shall be known as ‘Presidential Honors  
12 Scholars’.

13               “(2) CERTIFICATES; CEREMONIES.—The Sec-  
14 retary shall provide each student awarded a scholar-  
15 ship under this subpart a certificate from the Presi-  
16 dent that indicates that the recipient is a Presi-  
17 dential Honors Scholar. The certificate shall be pro-  
18 vided through the secondary school that selected the  
19 student. The school may present the certificate in an  
20 appropriate ceremony.

21       “(h) EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall, from time  
22 to time, conduct an evaluation of the program authorized  
23 by this subpart.

24       “(i) SECRETARIAL AUTHORITY.—In order to carry  
25 out the purposes of this subpart, the Secretary may, from

- 1 time to time, establish policies, procedures, and require-
- 2 ments, set deadlines, and require information.”.

